



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 30, 2006

Sanders Announces Reclaimed Water Spill Impact is Minimal

San Diego – At San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders' direction, the City's Water Department conducted extensive testing in the areas that were possibly impacted by last week's reclaimed water spill in the Scripps Ranch area. The spill entered the storm drain system and computer modeling showed that it eventually flowed to the Los Penasquitos Lagoon. Monitoring indicates that there was no impact to biological species in the creek and lagoon.

The Water Department team took samples from areas where the reclaimed water was projected to run. This includes the storm drain system, from Los Penasquitos Creek, from Penasquitos Creek west of its confluence with Carroll Canyon Creek and at the headwaters of the Los Penasquitos Lagoon. All of these tests came back normal. The levels of chlorine were typical in all the areas, which receive a lot of urban runoff. At this time it is impossible to confirm if water from the spill actually got to Los Penasquitos Lagoon.

Approximately 3.5 million gallons of water was discharged into the storm drain system because of the failure of three pressure release valves located near Scripps Westview and Scripps Lake Drive. The reclaimed water was destined for the City of Poway to be used for irrigation purposes. The Water Department has been in contact with the Regional Water Quality Control Board, the San Diego County Department of Environmental Health, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game.

It is believed the spill began on Monday, Jan. 23, 2006, after recycled water system pump motors were restarted. The City of Poway notified the Water Department that it wasn't getting the amount of water it should have been receiving. An investigation found that the water was discharging water into the storm drain, as the system was designed to do.

The City sells, on average, six million gallons of recycled water a day.